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*Popery destructive of the Evidence
of Christianity.*

A
SERMON
Preached before the
UNIVERSITY
OF
OXFORD,

At St. *MARY's*,

On *Wednesday, Novemb. 5. 1746.*

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To the REVEREND

Dr. *ISHAM*,

VICE-CHANCELLOR

OF THE

University of *OXFORD*,

THIS DISCOURSE

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HUMBLY INSCRIBED

By the *AUTHOR*.

To the REVEREND

DE. J. S. H. M.

VICE-CHANCELLOR

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

THE DISCOURSE

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By the AUTHOR.

MARK 7. 13.

— *Making the Word of God of none effect through your Tradition* —

THE Principles and Spirit of that Church, whose unsuccessful attempts on our Religion and Liberties gave occasion for the present Solemnity, have justly been observ'd to resemble in several respects those of Pharisaism among the Jews. Nor is there perhaps any circumstance in which they approach nearer to each other, than in being alike subject to the heavy imputation of *making the Word of God of none effect through their Traditions*. That our *Romish* Adversaries are on *many* accounts liable to this Charge, might easily be made appear. But I shall at present confine myself to *one* important Article of it, namely the Tendency which their Doctrines and Principles have to promote the cause of Scepticism and Infidelity, to render *the Word of God of none effect* by destroying the Credibility of it. A point this,
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which may deserve our attention, as it opens to us the true Nature and Spirit of Popery, is an Answer to a like Charge frequently brought by the Church of *Rome* against the Reformation, and at the same time clears the Gospel from some of those aspersions, which our modern Unbelievers have so industriously rak'd from the Corruptions of it. In pursuance therefore of this design, I shall

I. Enquire how far Popery affects those distinguishing Characteristics of Christianity, which constitute its *internal* Evidence. And

II. Examine in like manner the effect it has on the *external* Proofs of it.

And *first*, the Advocates for Christianity generally begin with observing the great Expediency of a *clear, comprehensive, and determinate* written System of Religion, and the Probability thence arising, that something of this kind may have been afforded us by God. And, as this Character is, they apprehend, sufficiently visible in the Gospel Revelation, they justly esteem it no inconsiderable circumstance in favour of its pretensions to a Divine Original. But the avow'd Principles of the *Romish* Church require us to look upon the Holy Scriptures

Scriptures in a very different light, to consider them as so *imperfect* even in the most necessary points of Faith and Practice, that oral Tradition must be call'd in to their assistance, so *obscure* and *indeterminate* in some of the fundamental articles of our Religion, that no private person can be sufficiently secure of their true meaning, and so liable to be *perverted* and *abus'd*, that they cannot even safely be trusted with the Bulk of Mankind. Admirable Characteristics these of a divine Revelation, and extremely proper to inspire a Sense of its Importance, and a favourable Presumption of its suppos'd Authority!

But *secondly*, from this general view of the Revelation itself, let us proceed to the Doctrines contain'd in it. And here the first question which arises concerning them, is, Whether they are agreeable to right Reason. For if any *one* of them, when properly understood, is plainly contrary to it, this is of itself sufficient to destroy the Authority of the *whole* Revelation. Doctrines may indeed undoubtedly be suppos'd to proceed from God, which mere unassisted reason could not have discover'd, and which, when reveal'd, are still in some respects so far above our reason, that we may be unable perfectly to comprehend them.

them. These, whatever difficulties may attend any attempt to be wise above what is written in a *particular* explanation of them, may yet justly be admitted under the notion of Mysteries. But where the case is different, where the nature of the subject is such, that we have the same *clear* and *perfect* view of it, which we have of any other that falls within the reach of our understandings, a Doctrine which is contain'd in a pretended Revelation, and yet plainly contradicts those Principles and Observations by which we judge of all other objects, is not only to be rejected *itself* as absurd, but exposes likewise the *whole System* of which it is a part, to our contempt and ridicule. And such, if any such there be, is this assertion of the Church of *Rome*, That in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper one finite natural Body is really and substantially chang'd into another, whilst every circumstance by which we can possibly distinguish one Body from another, remains perfectly the same. An absurdity so glaring, that, notwithstanding the vast multitude of dark terms and unmeaning distinctions with which the subtle defenders of it have endeavour'd to palliate this vile blunder of their ignorant ancestors, it effectually, if it be the Doctrine of Christ, overthrows

throws the Credibility of his Gospel : Not to mention that the Writers of the *Romish* Church have frequently done their utmost to strengthen this objection, by representing (in order to make us give up our understandings entirely in matters of Religion) Faith and Reason as equally at variance with each other throughout the whole System of Christianity.

The next thing worthy our notice in the internal Evidence of the Gospel is the Purity and Excellence of its Morality, or in other words the suppos'd tendency of its Doctrines and Precepts to recommend to us the most exalted scheme of Virtue, and to enforce the universal practice of it by every the most prevailing consideration imaginable. This is a circumstance, which is not indeed of itself sufficient to prove the Divine Authority of our Religion, and yet the Want of it could not but conclude strongly to its disadvantage. The Tendency therefore of any single Doctrine to the contrary, to serve the interests of Vice, or weaken the Obligations to Virtue, becomes a considerable objection to it. And is not Christianity, as it stands upon the Plan of our *Romish* adversaries, visibly liable to this objection? For, not to insist on some of the infamous Maxims of their Casuists, because

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though approv'd by too many, they are yet disavow'd by others; not to insist, I say, on these, Is it not evidently destructive of the necessity of a good Life, to suppose that the Priest is invested with a *judicial* Authority to forgive sins, and that a very imperfect degree of sorrow for them, arising merely from Fear of Punishment, (such an one indeed as the most hardened Sinner will sometimes feel, and which may produce only some faint and sudden thoughts of Amendment) that such ^a Attrition sufficiently qualifies us for this authoritative Absolution? So that all the hazard which the most wicked man runs of his salvation, is only the danger of so sudden a death as gives him no space for the *momentary* Act, on which his happiness depends; a chance, which whoever is strongly addicted to his vices will be too apt to run, when remission of them may at any time be had on such easy terms.

Farther, the great, and indeed the only sufficient enforcement of virtue with the Bulk of Mankind, arises from a conviction that their behaviour here absolutely determines them to Eternal Happiness or Misery hereafter, and that nothing to be done by *others* can atone

^a Conc. Trident. Sess. 14. c. 4.

for the want of what they may and ought to do for *themselves*. If then the Gospel really teaches a Purgatory; or that, besides the *eternal* state of torment which it threatens, there is another, the punishments of which are only *temporary*, and that these may be alleviated by what others may do for us, the whole force of the former is at once effectually eluded by the latter. Few even of the most abandon'd sinners will be induc'd to think so ill of their own case, as not to imagine others more wicked than themselves, for whom *alone* the worst is reserv'd. Each will rank himself in the number of those, whom some degree of *temporary* punishment must at last restore to the Divine favour. And when this point is once gain'd, the doctrine of Masses, Penances, and Indulgences is ready at hand, to dissipate the poor remainder of those guilty fears, which Natural Conscience might have otherwise kept alive in him.

To these Doctrines so evidently destructive of Private Virtue, the Solemnity of this Day calls upon us to join the scandalous but avow'd Principles and Practices of Popery with respect to Civil Society. Its pretended right not only to persecute single Persons, but to devote whole Nations to destruction on account of
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Religion, and the repeated execution of such horrid sentences by the blackest Treachery, and most inhuman Massacres. Add to these that absurd and detestable Position, which *both* Our *Romish* Princes since the Reformation have given Us sufficient reason to remember, that the most solemn promises and compacts made with Heretics are either void in themselves, or at least, whenever they at all affect the interests of the Church, may entirely be dissolv'd by her Authority. A position this so destructive of all mutual confidence, that, if men were not sometimes better than their principles oblige them to be, we might justly consider the members of that communion as persons of no Faith, and enemies to Human Society.

To say then that such Doctrines and Practices barely affect the *particular Argument* above-mention'd in favour of the Gospel arising from the suppos'd *Excellence* of its Morality, would be giving up the point I am concern'd to prove. Since they entirely destroy the very *Credibility* of any System with which they are connected; unless we can suppose it consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of God to reveal to us a Scheme of duty, which instead of *improving* the Law of Nature tends to *weaken* and *corrupt* it.

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The same observations may with equal Justice be extended to the *Religious* Principles and Practices of the Church of *Rome*. It was the distinguishing glory of the Gospel Revelation, according to Our notions of it, that it effectually overthrew the Polytheism, Idolatry, and Superstition of the Heathen World, and substituted the most rational and spiritual worship of the One True God in the place of them. But has not Popery studiously as it were effac'd this illustrious evidence of Christianity, by reviving the Pagan Superstition under a somewhat different appearance? By the adoration of the Cross and other Images, by the veneration it pays to Saints and Angels, by the introduction of such a vast and continually increasing multitude of imaginary Mediators, that the homage which is due by the Light of Reason to the Almighty Father of the Universe, and by the Christian Scheme to our Divine Redeemer and Sanctifier, is almost totally obscur'd and swallow'd up by them.

Much however has been said by the Writers of the *Romish* Communion to vindicate themselves from this heavy imputation. But it is their misfortune, that they do not more nearly resemble their Heathen Masters in their *Plan*, than in all the several *Pretences*,

ces, by which they have endeavour'd to palliate the absurdity of it. The glorious and exalted State of these objects of religious veneration — the limited Nature of the regard paid to them, founded principally on the notion of a delegated authority from the Supreme God, and their mediation with Him for us — the Reasonableness of supposing them employ'd in this and other kind offices, particularly for any nation or set of men, to whom they have heretofore born some Relation, or who may have humbly plac'd a peculiar Dependence upon them — the Usefulness of immediately addressing ourselves to some visible symbols or representations of these our benefactors, to heighten our devotion to them — and lastly, the infinite Sense at the same time express'd of the Majesty of the Supreme God, by thus acknowledging ourselves unworthy to hold a more direct and constant intercourse with Him, — All these ingenious and plausible Topics, together with an affected readiness to disclaim any thing which popular Practice might have establish'd inconsistently with them, All these Topics were originally the offspring, not of the dry, pedantic Schools of the *Romish* Communion, but of the more refin'd and specious Assertors of the Heathen Theology. It would there-

therefore be a considerable reflection upon Christianity, to suppose it to have demolish'd that *pompous*, but *useless* and *ill-grounded*, Fa-brick, only to erect another of an *insipid* and *Gothic* Model on the *same* Foundation.

But the *Foundation*, it may be pretended, was good, and the only reason for destroying the Heathen Temples arose from their being polluted by the *Unworthiness* of their inhabitants, from their being peopled either with imaginary beings, or with such at least as, if really existing, were too contemptible and odious in the sight of God to be of any advantage to their votaries: Whereas the Christian Shrines are adorn'd with objects every way deserving our veneration, with the great instruments of Providence in revealing the Will of God to mankind, and the brightest examples of heroic courage and constancy in their adherence to it, persons who may reasonably be suppos'd to stand high in the Divine favour, and who cannot but be concern'd for the professors of that religion, which it was their peculiar honour to have establish'd and supported. And yet the *Romish* Church seems as it were to have industriously depriv'd herself of the benefit even of *this* consideration, which, tho' it could not have *justified* a
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Species of Worship that is thus *wrong in itself*, yet might in some measure have lessen'd the Meanness and Absurdity of it. For, not to enter into a minute detail of particulars, it is notorious, that many of her Saints are as much the Children of Fancy, as some of the Heathen Deities; that others which did really exist, were persons, for whom perhaps it might have been better, if they had never been; and lastly, that the Bulk of them, tho' more innocent, were yet so extravagantly ridiculous, that whoever reads the accounts which are given of them by their profess'd admirers, must take them for Fools or Madmen, and the Religion of which they are represented as the great Exemplars, to be the wild product of an enthusiastic and distemper'd imagination.

But neither the groveling Superstition of the Vulgar, nor the more elevated and romantic Enthusiasm of her Saints, could so strongly have affected the Credibility of the Gospel, if they had not been carefully supported and encourag'd by wiser heads as the Engines of Worldly Policy. The *Wood, Hay, Stubble*, which was laid by those ignorant builders on the Foundation of Christianity, might easily have been remov'd, if, vile as they were in themselves, they had not been the fittest Materials

materials for erecting an arbitrary and lucrative Dominion over the Consciences of mankind. That this is the light in which Popery ought principally to be consider'd, is evident. Since in every other view it appears to be a *strange* and *unaccountable* Complication of the most trifling absurdities: whereas, when This Mirrour is once applied, it immediately becomes a *wise*, *regular*, and *uniform* System, every part of which is in some degree subservient to its great design of ingrossing to itself the Wealth and Power of the Universe. The tendency of its distinguishing Doctrines, Principles, and Practices to this One Point has often been demonstrated, and might easily be shewn at large, were it not a much fitter subject for a Treatise of Politics, than a Religious Enquiry.

Hence then the *Spiritual* Nature of Christ's Kingdom, with all the internal Characters of its Divine Original arising from it, is effectually destroy'd, and the Gospel is render'd, what its adversaries have always endeavour'd to represent it as being, a mixture of Worldly Policy, Superstition, and Enthusiasm. In this view of things, the argument drawn from the sudden and extensive Progress of our Religion, vanishes at once; it being no way surprizing, that a Scheme so indulgent to vul-

gar Notions and Corruptions, and so well calculated to render it the Interest of the more knowing part of mankind to impose upon the weaker, should be attended with all imaginable success. Nay even the Sufferings of the First Preachers of the Gospel can no longer be depended upon as a proof of their Sincerity. Since Impostors are sometimes known to fall a sacrifice to a favourite project, the advantage arising from which, if they could have put it in execution, would have sufficiently rewarded them for the dangers they underwent in support of it. But these reflections more properly belong to what I

Secondly propos'd to consider, The Effect which Popery has on the *external* Evidence of our Religion.

This indeed is a point, which, after what has been already observ'd, it may seem needless to insist upon. For if Popery has so far alter'd the very Spirit and Genius of Christianity, as to render it a system evidently unworthy of a Divine Original, the consideration of any *Facts* that can be brought in support of such a Revelation is entirely precluded by it. They can at most amount but to an high degree of *Moral Evidence* in its favour,

your, whereas arguments drawn from the *Internal Nature* of a Religion may fall little, if at all, short of *Demonstration* against it. A few general reflections therefore will suffice for the present subject of our Enquiry.

And the first which naturally occurs, and which has therefore been often handled at large, is the effect which the Doctrine of Transubstantiation necessarily has on the Evidence of Sense in matters of Religion, and consequently on Miracles, as depending entirely on this Evidence: A point, which cannot perhaps be set in a clearer light, than by considering it with a particular view to the Fundamental Miracle of Christianity, the Resurrection of its Author. For what could even an Eye-witness of this Fact, supposing him at the same time to teach the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, possibly say in defence of the former, which might not be immediately retorted upon him with regard to the latter by his Heathen Adversary? If he alledges that every outward circumstance that can be imagin'd, conspir'd to beget in him a full persuasion that the Person and Body of Christ were evidently the same, both before and after his crucifixion, the other may with equal reason and certainty reply, that the like combination

bination of circumstances equally conspires to convince him that the Bread and Wine after their consecration remain as evidently the same. Nor is there any one of the most subtle distinctions which the Church of *Rome* has invented, that can in the least degree turn the scale in her favour. But if the case stands thus even with an Eye-witness of our Saviour's Resurrection, how much more directly does it incline to the side of Infidelity with regard to Us at present, who must depend on the *remote* Testimony of *Others* for this and the like facts in support of Christianity, and have at the same time, upon this Her Scheme, an infinitely better Evidence, that of *Our own* Senses, to the contrary.

Nor is this the only instance in which Popery strikes at the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles. The constant Pretensions which the Church of *Rome* has made to a Power of the same extraordinary nature, and the little, low Artifices, to which she has had recourse in order to support this her imaginary claim, visibly tend to vilify the very Notion of Miracles, and derogate from the Effect, they would otherwise have on the minds of men. Nay, will not an Unbeliever, that resides within the pale of the *Romish* Church, thus naturally reason

son with himself? "The first Christians are said to have been converted to the belief of the Gospel, by Miracles of which they were either Eye-witnesses themselves, or of the Reality of which they had the living Testimonies of others who were so. And the Church which informs me of this, informs me also, that She has constantly been, and still is, invested with the like extraordinary Power of performing them. May not I therefore, as the *same* Means of Conviction, by which the first Christians were persuaded of the truth of their Religion, still subsist, safely suspend my judgement concerning it, till *They* are afforded me? Or if this be too much for every Single Person to expect, Ought I not to begin my Enquiry with examining into such, as are said to have been wrought nearest to my own Time, and when I have consider'd a proper Number of them, rest the merits of the cause principally on These?" That this is on many accounts the most natural Method of proceeding in the case here suppos'd, cannot be denied. Nor is it difficult to determine what would too often be the Result of it, if we consider how ill dispos'd a person must be to pay a proper attention to the more antient Miracles of Christ and his Apostles, who has before-hand gradually de-

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tested a continued series of Imposture for several ages together in their suppos'd Successors.

It is therefore the peculiar Honour and Happiness of the Reformation, to have rescued the Original Evidences of Christianity from this almost insuperable prejudice against them — To have refer'd the Unbeliever to *Them* for his conviction — and to have properly directed him in forming his judgement concerning them, by laying down such easy Rules with regard to the Nature of the actions themselves, the End for which they were perform'd, and the other circumstances relating to them, that these *Substantial Miracles* are almost at first View equally distinguishable from the *visionary Prodigies* either of Antient or Modern *Rome*.

To these observations others may be added, particularly concerning the tendency which Popery has, to weaken the Credit of those Records, by which alone the Evidences of the Gospel are at this distance of time sincerely convey'd to us. This the Church of *Rome* effects, partly by resting it, not on those *natural* Proofs, by which that of all other Writings is supported, but on *Her own* Authority, (an Authority, which not only no one can admit, according to *Her* notion of it, till he is previously

viously convinc'd of the Validity of her Charter, but which has likewise been too much impair'd by the many notorious Forgeries She has been convicted of, to be almost heard even as a *common* Evidence;) and partly by her endeavours to put her *Oral Traditions* upon an equal footing with these *Original Records* of Christianity; an attempt, which, however it may be *intended* only to serve her private purposes with regard to the former, may yet easily be *improv'd* by an Unbeliever to the manifest disadvantage of the latter.

Upon this short Survey then of the principal circumstances, that constitute the Evidence of our Religion, it appears that the *Force* and *Lustre* of *each* of them is considerably *weaken'd*, and the *Nature* of *some* so entirely *chang'd* by the peculiar Doctrines, Principles, and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, that they amount to a direct Proof of the contrary. This therefore may in the first place be applied, as an Answer to a like Charge brought by Her against the Reformation, as tending to encourage a spirit of Scepticism and Infidelity. Since in every one of the abovemention'd particulars, we have, by departing from her Communion, in effect obviated so many different and fundamental Objections to the truth of
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Christianity; and consequently have done the utmost in our power to establish a firm and well-grounded belief of it. But Infidelity has long ago openly set up its Standard amongst Us, whereas no attempts of this kind disturb Her repose. And wonderful indeed it would be, if the Abuse of Liberty should be found, where Liberty itself does not exist. That man must have an uncommon degree of resolution, who should venture to make a formal attack upon the avow'd Doctrines of Christianity, in places where it is so dangerous to drop the least insinuation against the most suspicious Notions of Popery. But do the Objectors really perceive no *Tendency* to Scepticism and Infidelity among the Members of their own Communion? Did they never observe, that in proportion to the restraints that are laid on men's Words and Actions in matters of Religion, there arises in the gayer part of mankind a total indifference about it; and that those who do think at all, generally carry their suspicions to the greatest length, when they are prevented from speaking out? If this is not the case, if there is no considerable Evil of this kind lurking among them, why all those dastardly apprehensions at every the least Symptom of it, why all those unwarrantable
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and barbarous methods of Imprisonment, Torture, Death, to stifle it immediatly at its birth? — Precautions, which in an age like this the Credit of their Religion would prevent them from using, if they were not abundantly convinc'd of their Necessity. Besides, the Question is not so properly concerning the *Place* in which Infidelity is profess'd, as about the *Cause* which originally gave rise to it, and the *Notions* by which it is principally supported. Let the Church of *Rome* therefore satisfy Herself and Us with relation to the following particulars, Whether the arrogant Demand of a *blind* and *unlimited* Obedience to Ecclesiastical Authority, join'd to the observation that this Deference was foolishly paid and abus'd to the worst purposes for several centuries together, is not apt to inspire men with a disgust for *all* Submission to Ecclesiastical Authority? Whether the Detection of a long series of the most impudent Forgeries and Impostures may not easily give rise to such a *suspicious* Turn of Mind, as is destructive even of *that* Reliance on the testimony of former ages, which is necessary to the support of *any standing* Revelation? And lastly, Whether by obtruding some vile and palpable Absurdities under the venerable notion of Mysteries, She has not af-

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forded too great an handle to Superficial Enquirers to reject every thing they cannot see clearly into, as useless or incredible? And if these considerations are not sufficient to account for the origin and progress of Infidelity amongst us, it may perhaps be in some respects indirectly owing to the Reformation. Since by representing in the strongest light the indispensableness of a *sincere* Obedience to the *genuine* Precepts of the Gospel, it has forc'd many to become its *avow'd* Adversaries, whom the more *indulgent* Casuistry of the *Romish* Church might have retain'd in their *nominal* adherence to the Profession of Christianity.

Secondly, The above reflections concerning the *Manner* and *Degree* in which Popery affects the Credibility of the Gospel, point out to us the true *Nature* and *Genius* of it. We may hence perceive, That it is a System, the falsehood of which in several of its fundamental articles appears, not merely from a *critical* Examination of the *darker* Passages in Holy Scripture, or even its inconsistency with other Doctrines more *plainly* deliver'd in it, but as it stands condemn'd by the *common* Principles and *natural* Sentiments of mankind: That as on this account it is unable to sub-

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fit itself on the footing of right Reason, so it tends moreover to involve the whole fabric of Christianity in one common Ruin with it: And that this its baneful influence reaches, not only to those *external Circumstances* by which the Gospel is supported, but penetrates into the very *Substance* of it, alters its *Nature*, defeats its *End*, and debases the most *exalted* and *rational* Scheme of Religion into an impure mixture of *Worldly Policy*, *Superstition*, and *Enthusiasm*.

Such was *the Yoke*, which neither our *Fathers* nor we were able to bear, and which, by our Providential Deliverances from the repeated attempts that have been made to bring us again into subjection to it, has so justly given occasion for This Day's Solemnity: A Solemnity, which can need no enforcement to the constant and proper Observance of it, if we consider

Thirdly, That these Attempts on our Religion and Liberties were not so much the *casual* effects of the *private* Wickedness or Folly of particular Persons, as the *necessary* result of the Nature and Spirit of the System they embrac'd. This the *uniform* Proceedings of the *Romish* Church in numberless past instances, and her behaviour at present, wherever

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She is fully able to exert herself, sufficiently demonstrate. And yet Popery, it is pretended, has taken a milder Turn, and the professors of it have been so far humaniz'd by the learning and refinement of these latter ages, that they are no longer now those savage persecutors and factious disturbers of society, which they formerly were. That this may indeed be the case of many *private Persons* of that persuasion will not be denied. But what solid Dependence can reasonably be plac'd on any suppos'd Change of Disposition, arising merely from a particular Conjunction of Circumstances, and which may perhaps make men better, than their Belief, if they acted consistently with it, would allow them to be. For the Temper of that Religion towards those who dissent from it, whatever different appearances Policy may require it to put on, is and must be invariably the same. It is founded on the very first Principles of the Church of *Rome*, and the light in which they oblige her to look upon *Herself* and *Us*: Upon *Herself*, as the Mother and Mistress of all other Churches, the Sole Depositary of the Catholic Tradition, and the Final and Infalible Judge of all Controversies concerning it: Upon *Us*, not as persons differing from her

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in Opinion, but as Rebels to her Authority; as the Subverters of a Society, to which the rights and concerns of all others are entirely to give way; and as doom'd on these accounts to so deplorable a state hereafter, that common Charity requires her to use every remedy in her power, how painful soever it may seem, for our recovery, or, if that be impossible, to prevent us at least from involving others in the like calamity with ourselves. Lastly, if to the light in which *She* views *Herself* and *Us*, we add that in which *She* appears to *Us*, we cannot but see at once the intimate connection of Fraud and Violence with such a combination of Superstition and Imposture, and that the *Temper* of Popery, if we are ever so unhappy as to give it an opportunity of exerting itself, will be always no less destructive of our *Civil* and *Religious Constitution*, than its *Doctrines* are of the *Spirit* and *Design* of the *Gospel*.

May these and the like Considerations therefore inspire us with a just Sense of the manifold Blessings, which were as on This Day vouchsaf'd us, In our Deliverance both from the horrid *Conspiracy*, and the more recent *Dominion*, of Popery, and particularly in the present consequence of the latter, the Establishment

ment of a Succession of Protestant Princes on the Throne of these Kingdoms. May this Establishment be as *lasting*, as it is *necessary* to our Welfare. May all Attempts to defeat it be attended with the *Success*, they *deserve*. And may neither our Vices nor Dissensions derogate from the Value of these Blessings, or provoke the Almighty to withdraw them from us.

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